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PAKEHA COLOUR PREJUDICE

"Opportunities denied to Maoris"

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

Wellington, April 23.

An American scholar, Dr David Ausubel, who spent eleven months studying the Maori in New Zealand, has said in a new book "Maori Youth" that Pakeha New Zealanders practise colour discrimination in nearly every walk of life.

This, in his view, is the biggest factor impeding the education and progress of the Maori people. He says:

"Vigorous measures must be adopted to improve the steadily deteriorating racial situation," he says. "Discriminatory employment practices deriving from colour prejudice and from the popular stereotype of the Maori as lazy, undependable, and capable only of rough manual labour tends to bar Maoris from many high status occupations.

"The denial of equal occupational opportunity to Maori youth constitutes the most serious and prognostically least hopeful factor impeding Maori vocational achievement. This is because colour prejudice is not only deeply ingrained and increasing in the Pakeha population as a whole but its existence is categorically denied by both the people and Government of New Zealand."

Discriminatory practices in employment, housing, hotel accommodation, restaurants, and cinemas should be made illegal. Schools, churches, and civic organisations should sponsor realistic educational campaigns to promote racial tolerance and goodwill. The present system of vocational guidance, he asserts, is much too superficial, is staffed by inadequately trained personnel, and is too passive in its orientation.

Dr Ausubel, who is Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Illinois, wrote before the publication of the Hunn Report and before a new outlook in Government towards Maori problems. Nevertheless Dr Ausubel has touched on many raw spots in New Zealand racial policies.

Dr Ausubel is critical of the Maori too. He says the Maori people must be willing more realistically to come to grips with the growing problem of colour prejudice instead of burying their heads in the sand. They must be willing to take more responsibility in combating the symptoms of incomplete or inadequate adjustment to Pakeha culture, in furthering the educational and vocational advancement of youth, and in perpetuating worthwhile elements in their cultural heritage.

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